

**Governor's Upper Yellowstone River Task Force**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**August 24, 2000**  
**City/County Community Room**  
**Meeting began at 7:00 p.m.**

**I. Introductions**

**Members Present:**

John Bailey, Chair	Brant Oswald
Roy Aserlind	Jerry O'Hair
Michelle Goodwine	Bob Wiltshire
David Haug	Ellen Woodbury
Tom Lane	

**Others Present:**

Allan Steinle, Ex-Officio	Thomas Hallin	Helen Nelson
Stan Sternberg, Ex-Officio	Ron Hoagland	Jeanne-Marie Souvigney
Joel Tohtz, Ex-Officio	Andy Dana	Doug Schemske
Liz Galli-Noble, Coordinator	Pete Story	Stan Todd
Amy Miller, Administrative Secretary	Edwin Nelson	Dean Yashan

**II. Prior Meeting Minutes**

The July 18, 2000 minutes were approved with the following modification: Rod Siring was present at the meeting.

**III. Socio-Economic Subcommittee**

Michelle Goodwine, subcommittee member, updated the Task Force on the Request for Proposal (RFP) that the subcommittee has been developing over the past three months. The question the subcommittee asked the Task Force was: Will this RFP address the social and economic issues within the Study Area? Will it answer the questions that the Task Force has concerning social and economic issues in the area?

Task Force members were given a copy of the RFP to review; Liz Galli-Noble requested that comments be sent to her by the next Task Force meeting. Liz has sent a copy of the draft RFP to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for review. Bob Wiltshire asked Liz to send a copy of the RFP to the TAC and anyone else interested in reviewing the RFP.

Questions then arose concerning the TAC having expertise in this area, because there is no social scientist on the TAC. Liz has agreed to ask Duncan Patten, TAC Chairman, if the members are comfortable giving technical assistance on the RFP. The subcommittee proposed the following timeline: (1) receive comments and edits on the RFP by the next Task Force meeting, (2) discuss the RFP and formally approve a final draft at the September Task Force meeting, (3) incorporate final edits into a approved RFP, and formally advertise the RFP in October. The deadline for proposal submittal would be November 1, 2000. The subcommittee, possibly with help from the TAC, would then choose a contractor by December 4, 2000, and give the contractor one year to complete the Socio-Economic Assessment.

**IV. Financial Updates**

**1. Grant Spending Report:**

Amy Miller reported on the following to the Task Force:

Start-Up Grant-DEQ

Grant amount:	\$49,138.00	Spent:	\$21,292.40	Balance:	\$27,845.60
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319 Grant (1)-DEQ

Grant amount:	\$40,000.00	Spent:	\$40,000.00	Balance:	\$0.00
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RDGP Grant-DNRC			
Grant amount:	\$299,940.00	Spent:	\$105,060.34
		Balance:	\$194,879.66
319 Grant (2)-DEQ			
Grant amount:	\$58,000.00	Spent:	\$1,777.51
		Balance:	\$56,222.49
Riparian Trend Analysis Study-DNRC			
Grant amount:	\$6,500.00	Spent:	\$0.00
		Balance:	\$6,500.00
Watershed Upland Study-DNRC			
Grant amount:	\$10,000.00	Spent:	\$370.00
		Balance:	\$9,630.00

John Bailey requested that Amy report on all grants received by the Task Force, including the grants that have previously been expended.

## **2. New Department of Environmental Quality 319 Grant:**

Liz Galli-Noble was instructed to write an additional 319 Grant at a previous Task Force meeting, and presented that grant for final Task Force approval at this meeting. This would be the third 319 Grant that the Task Force has submitted, specifically requesting \$40,000 to help fund the coordinator position, and outreach and education activities. Although similar in language to the previous two 319 grants, Liz did write a new section that directly tied the Task Force Cumulative Effects Investigation to a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) plan. She pointed out how the Task Force investigation parallels a TMDL plan, with only one major exception--implementation. Liz asked that any edits from Task Force members be given to her after the meeting. She also requested that Task Force members submit Letters of Support to the DEQ no later than August 30, 2000.

When asked if the Task Force was a good fit for 319 funding, Dean Yashan Water Quality Specialist (DEQ), explained that by applying for 319 funding, the Task Force was not "bending the rules," in fact the cumulative effects investigation fits really well with what a TMDL is, and what the source normally funds.

**Ellen Woodbury made the motion to approve the 319 Grant. The motion was seconded by Michelle Goodwine. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **3. Approval to Purchase GPS Unit:**

Liz Galli-Noble asked for approval to spend \$1,500 of Start-Up Grant funding to purchase a second GPS unit for the Watershed Land Use Study. The total cost for the unit is \$2,000, of which \$500 will be paid for through the DNRC-Watershed Assistance Grant. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has already purchased one unit for the project, but could use a second unit. The second unit would double the speed of their data collection effort. The unit, once purchased, will be housed in the Task Force office and will be available for other research teams. Like all Task Force office equipment the GPS unit will belong to the District in the end. Given that the NRCS has given \$32,000 of in-kind contribution, this request is minimal. Liz provided a handout with more information about the unit (see *Attachment A*).

**Tom Lane made the motion to approve the purchase of a GPS unit with \$1,500 of funding from the Start Up Grant. The motion was seconded by Roy Aserlind. Bob Wiltshire chose to abstain from voting. The motion passed.**

## **4. Funding Updates:**

### ***(a) US Army Corps of Engineers--Section 22 Program***

Liz Galli-Noble reported that for fiscal year 2000 the Task Force would not be able to tap into Section 22 Program funding. However, Liz reported that for fiscal year 2001, the Corps the Section 22 Program could have

as much as \$50,000 available for Task Force efforts. This funding would be a good match for the Socio-Economic Study. One major challenge with Section 22 Program funding is the fact that it requires a 50 percent non-federal cash match.

***(b) RDGP #1 Contract Rewrite***

Liz Galli-Noble and Amy Miller are working with the DNRC on rewriting contracts for the first RDGP grant. The contracts will reflect the shift of funding (\$60,000) from the USGS Hydrology Study to the University of Montana Riparian Trend Analysis. The Montana Department of Transportation has provided additional funding for the USGS for the Hydrology Study, freeing-up \$60,000.

***(c) EPA--River Network, Watershed Assistance Grant***

Liz Galli-Noble reported that the River Network Grant, requesting \$10,000 of additional funding for the Watershed Land Use Study, was submitted on August 15, 2000. John Bailey approved the final draft of the grant.

**V. Outreach and Education Activities**

**Fly Fish Federation (FFF) Presentation:**

Liz reported that on August 5, 2000 she and Adam Craig did a presentation on the Task Force Cumulative Effects Investigation to members of the Fly Fish Federation at their annual convention. Roy Aserlind, who also attended, commented that the presentation was positively received and informative.

**Greater Yellowstone Coalition (GYC):**

John Bailey, Liz Galli-Noble, and Rod Siring met with members of the GYC on August 10, 2000. The GYC had called John personally and asked to meet with the Task Force. He in turn requested Liz attend and invited Rod Siring as a neutral Task Force member. The discussion with GYC staff included:

- GYC wants to be part of the Task Force.
- Task Force membership is the Governor's decision.
- GYC is not comfortable speaking at Task Force meetings.
- GYC is comfortable with our cumulative effects investigation and study components.

John Bailey was encouraged by the meeting; he felt it was positive. John encouraged Task Force members to also talk to Rod Siring for his opinion on the meeting.

**Project WET Tour:**

Rab Cummings, Montana Watercourse Project WET Coordinator, asked the Task Force to help host an Upper Yellowstone River Watershed teacher's tour. On Wednesday, August 16--one day of a five-day tour for the teachers--Liz organized several of the research teams to meet with the group to explain their scientific studies and demonstrate their methodologies. The researchers were: Chuck Dalby (DNRC), Mary Louise Polzin (University of Montana), and Steve Holnbeck (USGS). Liz began the day with a short overview of the Task Force and the integrated design of the Cumulative Effects Investigation.

Commenting on how insightful a tour like that would be, Andy Dana asked if the Task Force would consider hosting a similar tour for the public and the Task Force members. Mr. Dana is particularly interested in how the data is collected in the field. Early spring was mentioned as the best time to organize such an event.

**VI. Other Yellowstone River Efforts**

**Yellowstone River Conservation District Council (YRCDC)**

John Bailey and Liz Galli-Noble explained that the YRCDC is completing a Rapid Aerial Assessment for the middle and lower sections of the Yellowstone River. The YRCDC is asking the Task Force if they want to participate in the assessment in the Upper Yellowstone River Study Area (Gardiner to Springdale). The total cost of the Rapid Aerial Assessment is \$24,000, while to complete the upper Yellowstone River section the Task Force would have to pay only \$1,000. The Rapid Aerial Assessment will be flown in September 2000. Liz provided a handout with information regarding the Rapid Aerial Assessment (*Attachment B*).

Discussion followed with Task Force members making the following comments:

- What is the quality of equipment that will be used?

Ron Hoagland, NRCS, explained that the equipment used to complete the Rapid Aerial Assessment is high-tech and works effectively.

- The Task Force does not want to duplicate efforts already done in the upper section.
- The video will add to research information.
- Will be able to look at video frame by frame and produce photographs.
- Is this video needed?
- Chuck Dalby's written comments stated that the video will be useful for analyzing geomorphology.
- The Task Force did complete a Physical Features Inventory in 1998, which included floating the river.
- Liz mentioned that the video could be used for outreach and education.

**Tom Lane made the motion to approve the Task Force participating in the Rapid Aerial Assessment for the upper Yellowstone River for \$1,000.00. The motion was seconded by David Haug. John Bailey, Jerry O'Hair, and Bob Wiltshire voted "No" on the motion. The motion passed with majority approval.**

### **YRCDC Interagency Round Table**

The Task Force has been invited to participate in an Inter-Agency Round Table hosted by the YRCDC and scheduled for October 24 to 26 in Billings. Mary Ellen Wolfe (Montana Watercourse Director) through an EPA RGI grant is helping the YRCDC and Forum to coordinate activities and prepare for the meeting. John Bailey expressed his concern with the Task Force's role with the YRCDC. The YRCDC is responsible for the entire Yellowstone River and is long-term; the Task Force is responsible to the Governor and is short-term. The Task Force Cumulative Effects Investigation is the pilot project on the Yellowstone, and needs to be completed in order to know what will work.

The Task Force is ahead of the YRCDC by two years. We already have a link with the YRCDC through the Park Conservation District, a voting member of both groups. Liz expressed that the Task Force has a good opportunity to establish who we are and define the differences between the YRCDC and the Task Force, by doing a presentation at the Inter-Agency Round Table. The final decision made by the Task Force was to do a presentation at the Inter-Agency Round Table, but not to co-host the meeting.

### **NRCS/Park Conservation District--Yellowstone River Listening Session, August 21, 2000**

The Park Conservation District hosted the listening session for NRCS on August 21, 2000. The listening session was a follow-up to Senator Max Baucus' request for NRCS to find out how the agency can better serve the landowners along the Yellowstone River. The District asked the Task Force to do a presentation at the listening meeting and Liz did so. Liz thanked the District for the opportunity to update the public about Task Force activities.

### **Yellowstone River Tours**

John Bailey reported the Corps contacted the Task Force requesting that they host a tour of the Yellowstone River on September 11, 2000.

The Office of Management and Budget is also requesting a tour of the Yellowstone River. The tour will be on October 29, 2000. Task Force members need to contact Liz if interested in going on the tour.

### **County Floodplain Permit – Dikes**

John Bailey explained to the Task Force that he communicated with the Park County Commissioners and staff about "unpermitted" structures in the floodplain along the Yellowstone River. John was informed by Ellen Woodbury, County Planner, that Park County had received a letter from the State of Montana stating that the County would have to take immediate legal action on these "unpermitted" dikes. John pointed out to the Commissioners that given that the Task Force is already collecting system-wide data on the Yellowstone River,

would be logical for this process be reevaluated, in order to allow Task Force data to be released. This would save the County and private landowners a great deal of time and money. There is little or no data available in the areas where these focal dikes are located, and if the landowners were forced to gather information required by the County, they would simply be duplicating the same effort already under way by the Task Force.

John explained that he did not talk to any of the other Task Force members about this issue before he took action. John acknowledged that he used the Task Force's power. He did so because he is fearful that tensions could rise over this issue and cause more difficulty in getting landowner permission, which could in turn possibly shut down the entire Task Force investigation.

Brant Oswald and Bob Wiltshire commented that they are uneasy using the Task Force to influence a decision. It may have been better if Bailey had contacted Task Force members ahead of time. The County is scheduled to meet with the DNRC and landowners concerning the dikes on September 20, 2000. The meeting is open to the public. Jerry O'Hair and Tom Lane commented that some landowners are becoming frustrated with the whole process.

## **VII. Research Team Updates**

John Bailey and Liz Galli-Noble reported that each research team will be giving study updates and presenting data to the Task Force beginning with the next meeting. John stressed the need for the Task Force to understand the data and this will also give the public an opportunity to ask questions.

## **VIII. Annual Review of Task Force Coordinator**

John Bailey reported that the subcommittee (John Bailey, Ellen Woodbury, David Haug, and Mike Atwood) met on August 11, 2000 to evaluate Liz Galli-Noble's job performance after one year. The subcommittee recommended that Liz be given a pay raise from \$15 to \$17 per hour. The subcommittee is very pleased with Liz's job performance, and based their decision on the work accomplished, not a formula.

The District is concerned with the large amount of "comp time" that Liz has accumulated over the last year. She has been unable to use the "comp time." The subcommittee directed Liz to use the "comp time" by December 31, 2000.

Liz was also directed to no longer attend YRCDC meetings, unless specifically asked and needed by the YRCDC. The subcommittee feels this will help reduce her workload.

**Bob Wiltshire made the motion to change compensation for Liz Galli-Noble to reflect the subcommittee's recommendation (a raise in pay from \$15 to \$17 per hour). The motion was seconded by Michelle Goodwine. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Having been approved by the Task Force, the recommendation would be presented to the District for final approval.**

## **IX. Schedule Future Task Force Meetings**

Liz Galli-Noble would like Task Force members to call her at 222-3701 if they will be unable to attend scheduled meetings.

Next Task Force meetings are:

September 19, 2000 at the City/County Courthouse, Community Room at 7:00 p.m.

October 19, 2000 at the City/County Courthouse, Community Room at 7:00 p.m.

## **X. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.**

